

Medical Sharps and Medication Disposal for Reading Residents

Reading residents may bring medical sharps, needles, unwanted prescription and over the counter medications for safe disposal to the two kiosks located in the lobby of the Reading Police Station, 15 Union Street, 7 days a week and 24 hours a day.

Household Sharps

As of July 1, 2012, the MA Department of Public Health banned the disposal of household medical sharps in regular trash. Safe disposal of sharps protects recycling and trash collection workers and family members of sharps users. People exposed to loose needles are at risk of painful injury or contracting diseases such as Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B and HIV/AIDS. Before depositing household sharps in the kiosk:

- Sharps must be stored in a sharps container.
- Containers need to be puncture resistant and non-see through.
- Empty containers such as laundry detergent or bleach bottles can be used or specific medical sharps containers that can be purchased for a fee at the Reading Health Department at Town Hall, local pharmacies or medical supply stores.
- ***Glass containers, coffee cans, cardboard boxes and paper or plastic bags are not appropriate sharps storage containers. They will not be permitted for disposal in the kiosk. Needles are not allowed to be loose or left outside of the kiosk.***

Medications

In the United States, there is an increasing problem of prescription drug abuse, where drugs are commonly obtained from family and friends. Improperly disposing of these drugs puts the community at risk for abuse and misuse. Flushing them down the toilet or simply throwing them away can be a potential safety and health hazard and detrimentally impact the water supply, wildlife and the community. The medication collection kiosk accepts expired and unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medications. Before depositing medications in the kiosk:

- Remove any personal information from prescription labels.
- Place all liquid medications and loose pills, etc. in a sealable plastic bag.
- Sharps/needles must be separated from medication first and put in the designated kiosk.

Please contact the Board of Health at 781-942-9061 with any questions.

